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## SORENSEN BEST PAPER AWARD

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The Journal of Air Transportation World Wide is proud to announce the *Sorenson Best Paper Award*, named in honor of Dr. Frank E. Sorenson. This award gives recognition to the author(s) with the best literary and scholarly contributions to the field of air transportation. The Sorenson Award will be granted by the Editor on the basis of reviewer rankings during the review process. The manuscript with the highest overall score will be awarded the *Sorenson Best Paper Award*. This will be considered a high recognition in the aviation community.

Dr. Frank E. Sorenson was a pioneer in the field of aviation education since its early beginnings in the 1940s. A renowned educator and prolific writer, Sorenson contributed not only education texts to the field, but also served as a consultant and innovator throughout the expanding realm of aviation education and research.

Dr. Sorenson's aviation impact and potential were recognized early on by the National Aeronautics Association when he received the Frank G. Brewer Trophy in 1946 for "the most outstanding contribution to the development of youth in the field of education and training." In 1958, the University Aviation Association honored him with the William A. Wheatley Award in recognition of outstanding contributions to aviation education. These were the first of many awards and citations he would earn on a local and national level as he continued his active involvement in the field of aerospace education up until his death in 1977.

Through his involvement with the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Teachers College, Dr. Sorenson generated some of the earliest teaching materials for aviation education and textbooks for military aviators during World War II. Throughout the course of his career, he contributed over forty articles and publications related to the field of aviation education. His efforts guided the way for extensive aerospace research and scholarship from the grassroots to the global level through his participation in Civil Aeronautics Association, the World Congress on Air Age Education, and UNESCO.

He has served as chairman of the Air Force Association's Aerospace Council, the Aerospace Education Forum at the First World Congress of Flight, the U.S. Air Force's Air Training Command, the "Men in Space" book series, and NASA's Aerospace Education Advisory Committee. As a result of his visionary involvement and development of the Link Foundation, the

organization has gone on to provide grants now totaling over a half million dollars a year to support and advance aerospace education and training in aeronautics.

Dr. Sorenson's continuous involvement in aviation education and research laid the groundwork for many of the advancements currently taking place in the industry. His continual research and educational outreach demonstrated how one person can make a difference not just today but well into the future.

Currently, several awards exist that are representative of his achievement in aerospace education and research exist. These include the Frank E. Sorenson Award for Excellence in Aviation Scholarship, representing the highest scholarly honor in aviation education, presented annually by the University Aviation Association; the Frank E. Sorenson Pioneers in Nebraska Aviation Education Award presented annually by the University of Nebraska at Omaha Aviation Institute, as well as a memorial lecture fund and scholarship fund.

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## A TRIBUTE TO DR. FRANK ENGLAND SORENSON\*

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Since the beginning, the field of aviation and Dr. Frank E. Sorenson have been interwoven. In the same year the Wright Brothers made their historic flight, Frank England Sorenson was born to an immigrant village storekeeper and his wife in rural Nebraska. The year was 1903. It would be some time before Sorenson would enter the fledgling field of aerospace studies and become a driving force that would continue for nearly 40 years until his death in 1977. The benefits of his involvement remain strong and vital today.

Sorenson began his career as a schoolteacher prior to attending the Teachers College in Lincoln. His love of teaching and helping others learn was central to his entire career. Sorenson once said, "My interest in developments in aerospace grew out of my two basic interests—teacher education and geographical instruction. From my point of view, these two fields must reflect the new discoveries in air and space" (Quoted in Nebraska's Air Age Pioneer, 1961). While attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, he earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1932 and a master's degree in 1935. He taught geography for one year at Ohio State University and returned to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1936.

1940 was a pivotal year. Sorenson received his Ph.D., and the first of many requests for aviation education teaching materials as part of the UNL Teachers College. Using teacher workshops, Sorenson and his group developed a manual for the classroom that became so sought after on the state level that he sent copies to airlines and the Civil Aeronautics Commission. His proficiency proved crucial to the war effort of the 1940s. He shared co-responsibility for some of the earliest textbooks for military aviators. On the homefront, as the newly appointed Nebraska Air Age Education Division administrator, he set about creating curriculums that would "relate air age materials to such subjects as physics, mathematics and social studies" (Nebraska's Air Age Pioneer, 1961).

He was a frequent consultant to National Aeronautics Association (NAA) on aviation matters. In 1946 he received the Frank G. Brewer Trophy from the NAA for "the most outstanding contribution to the development of youth in the field of education and training" (Nebraska's Air Age Pioneer, 1961). Awarded annually since 1943, this recognition is regarded as the most prestig-

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ious national award dedicated to aviation and space education. Sorenson's work was recognized for determining what knowledge teachers must have to effectively instruct the air-minded youth. Over the course of his career, he has contributed publications totaling well over the 44 listed below. He prepared such books as "Elements of Pre-Flight Aeronautics" and "Now We Fly." This was just the beginning of Sorenson's impact in the field of aerospace education and research as he continued to play an active role throughout his lifetime.

With the war over, the field of aviation and aerospace studies opened even wider. Sorenson conducted a special study in the late 1940s for the United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). He went on to be a delegate to the third national conference of the U.S. Commission for UNESCO. On a more regional level, Sorenson championed and helped establish aerospace programs at other colleges and universities. During this time, he began his association with Edwin A. Link and the Link aviation training aids. Together they established the Link Foundation (December 10, 1953), which by 1959 provided grants of \$181,775 in support of 71 projects over a six-year period (Nebraska's Air Age Pioneer, 1961). In the beginning, Sorenson developed the original programs and charter. His involvement continued as he went on to lead all program developments as well as being the primary grant approver while serving as a Trustee and Director of Program Development. Currently the Link Foundation has a \$12 million principal with annual grants of over a half million dollars each year (M. Link, personal communication, September 22, 1999). Designed to advance education and training in aeronautics, the Link Foundation is still going strong.

As director of Summer Sessions at UNL from 1948-1968, Sorenson was the principal power behind Project TOGA (Teacher Orientation to General Aviation). This joint project between the Nebraska Department of Aerospace and the UNL Summer Sessions, conducted between 1962 and 1965, significantly influenced the future development of the Curriculum Guide for Aerospace Education. The guide was written in 1965 by a committee of aerospace teachers in Lincoln, Nebraska and made available nationally by the FAA (Lueninghoener, 1994). During this time period, Sorenson also served as president of the North Central Conference of Summer Schools and the Association of University Summer Sessions.

While remaining strong within the university community, Sorenson continued to serve at a national level. He was chairman of the Air Force Association's Aerospace Council (1957- 1962) and the Aerospace Education Forum at the First World Congress of Flight (1959). He played a role on the advisory board of the U.S. Air Force's Air Training Command (1955-1961), the "Men in Space" book series, and Air Force Civil Air Patrol Education Committee with a rank of Colonel. In 1970, Sorenson received the Apollo Achievement

Award from NASA for his contribution to space education research. Five years later, he was awarded a place in the National Aerospace Education Association's Hall of Honor. The following year, the University of Illinois presented Dr. Sorenson with an Institute of Aviation Certificate of Achievement for his generous support of research programs, flight training and staff development. At the time of his death, Dr. Frank E. Sorenson had been awarded 24 aerospace education national awards and numerous citations.

Sorenson never abandoned his love of geography as he entered the world of aerospace education. Instead he made a connection between the two worlds that translated into a productive and fruitful career which benefitted the entire aerospace community. The programs he helped to establish set the groundwork for the thousands of pilots and aerospace specialists that have helped to make the United States the aerospace world power it is. In a time before personal computers, he saw the global community emerging and said, "...man's earth is shrinking today our world is a neighborhood of nations resulting from the fact that we can move through the air" (Nebraska's Air Age Pioneer, 1961).

Upon Dr. Sorenson's death in May 1977, several memorials to continue his work were created. These included programs at the Clare McPhee Elementary School Space Center which had been dedicated to him in 1968, the Dr. Frank E. Sorenson Memorial Scholarship Fund for Arnold Air Society or Angel Flight members, and the Dr. Frank England Sorenson Memorial Summer Lecture Series established at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. The lecture series featured such topics as "Humanization Beyond Earth: The New Age of Space Industrialization," "The Future of Education and Education in the Future," and "Life Sciences as an Adventure in Space."

To continue and expand this work, the University of Nebraska at Omaha Aviation Institute (UNOAI), in conjunction with the Sorenson family, has created three awards at the state, national, and worldwide level. In the state of Nebraska, UNOAI designed the **Dr. Frank E. Sorenson "Pioneers in Nebraska Aviation Education"** honor to be conferred each year. At the national level, the University Aviation Association (UAA) will bestow annually the **Dr. Frank E. Sorenson Award for Excellence in Aviation Scholarship** to represent the highest scholarly honor in aviation education. Additionally, the *Journal of Air Transportation World Wide* established a best paper designation in Dr. Sorenson's name to be recognized in each journal. This three-pronged award plan honors the many contributions Dr. Sorenson made to the sphere of aviation education in his influential career.

#### Awards:

Frank G. Brewer Trophy from National Aeronautics Association, 1946

William A. Wheatley Award *In recognition of outstanding contributions to aviation education* from the University Aviation Association, 1958

Flying Cornhusker Award *Dean of Nebraska Air Education* from the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics, 1958

Hoyt S. Vandenberg Trophy *For outstanding contributions to public understanding of air power* from the Air Force Association, 1959

Civil Air Patrol Recognition Award, 1961

Clare McPhee Elementary School Space Center dedicated to Frank E. Sorenson, 1968

Apollo Achievement Award by NASA, 1970

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Community Development Award, 1975

National Aerospace Education Association's Hall of Honor, 1976

Frank England Sorenson Summer Lecture Series established at University of Nebraska Foundation by friends and colleagues through a fund, 1977

Honorary National Angel, 1978 Arnold Air Society/Angel Flight Program at UN-L

Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame, 1994

#### **Citations:**

Nebraska Wing of the Air Force Association, 1958

U.S. Air Force Recruiting Services

Air Reserves Forces

Arnold Air Society *"The education fraternity of America is rapidly awakening to the importance of the aerospace age in the field of education. A pioneer in this process of awakening the interest of the educator is Dr. Frank England Sorenson."* 1960

United States Air Force Scroll of Appreciation *"For rendering meritorious service to the United States Air Force from 1940-1961 as Professor of Education at the University of Nebraska and as Administrator of the Nebraska Air Age Education Division."* 1961

Air Force Association Citation of Honor *"In recognition of his devotion to the principles of the Air Force Association, and particularly in tribute to his brilliant leadership as the first Chairman of the Aerospace Education Council."* 1964

Arnold Air Society Certificate of Appreciation, 1975

Link Foundation Citation for Distinguished Professional Service as Trustee, 1975

Institute of Aviation Certificate of Appreciation "*For generous support of research programs, flight training and staff development*" from the University of Illinois, 1976

### **Professional Recognition:**

- 1940        Selected to serve as consultant to National Commission on Teacher Education Program conducted in South Carolina
- 1941-1942   Selected by the Civil Aeronautics Administration to serve as consultant on Aviation Education
- 1943        Selected by the Civil Aeronautics Administration to conduct a National Study of the Teaching of Pre-Flight Aeronautics in high schools.
- 1945        Named consultant to the Air Age Education Departments of several major airlines
- 1945        Assisted with the Denver Congress on Air Age Education
- 1945        Administered the Iowa-Nebraska Audio-Visual and Air Age Education Institutes
- 1946        Directed activities for the Social Studies Group in attendance at the World Congress on Air Age Education in New York
- 1946        Named as member of the Executive Committee of the Institute of Air Age Activities, a national organization established to promote research in Air Age Education
- 1946        Texas A. & M. Evaluation Study of Junior Aviation Project
- 1947        Selected to assist with Lake Success Conference and Mountain-Plains Conference on UNESCO Education Project
- 1948        Oklahoma A. & M. Conference on Air Age Education
- Listed in:   *Who's Who in American Education*  
              *Leaders in Education*  
              *American Men of Science. III*

### **Membership:**

Aerospace Education Council of the Air Force Association  
Aerospace Education Committee of the Civil Air Patrol  
Deans and Directors of Summer Sessions  
Institute of Air Age Activities, Executive Committee

Men of Space Advisory Committee  
 National Aerospace Education Association  
 National Association of School Administrators  
 National Council for Geographic Education  
 National Council for Social Studies  
 National Education Association  
 Phi Delta Kappa  
 Research and Service Committee of the North Central Association  
 Technical Assistance Board, The Link Foundation  
 University Aviation Association

### **Professional Experience:**

- 1938-1971 Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor of Educational Administration & Secondary Education at the University of Nebraska
- 1940-1977 Consultant to selected school systems
- 1948-1968 Director of Summer Sessions and Chairman, Department of Educational Services at the United Nations
- 1943-1945 Director of Supervision and Curriculum Development, Nebraska Department of Public Instruction (LOA)
- 1949-1951 First United Nations Education Program in the world at UN-L
- 1949-1955 Civil Air Patrol Air Age Education Committee as Colonel, CAP-USAFA
- 1950 U.S. named staff member, International Seminar on the Teaching of Geography, UNESCO, Montreal, Canada (summer) (LOA)
- 1951-1953 Director of Education and Technical Training, U.S. Technical Cooperation Administration (Point 4) U.S. government worldwide (LOA)
- 1955-1956 Air Training Command Advisor Board
- 1957-1962 Air Force Aerospace Education Council, chairman
- 1960-1965 Coronet Film Company series of geography visual materials for use in elementary schools educational collaborator
- 1963-1968 NASA Aerospace Education Committee
- 1963-1969 Consultant to Matson Navigation Company
- 1965-1975 Coordinator of on-board ship educational enrichment programs for Matson, Princess Cruises and Royal Viking Lines



- 1968-1969 Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Faculties
- 1969-1971 Professor of Educational Administration and Secondary Education, and Coordinator, Aerospace Education Division, UN Teachers College
- 1970-1971 Consultant to Princess Cruises
- 1970-1971 Special Assistant to UNL Academic Dean
- 1971-1977 Special Assistant to the Director, Mid-America Research Center, Inc.
- 1969-1971 Member of Board of Directors of Educators Security Insurance Company
- 1971-1973 Director of Educational Programs, Royal Viking Line

## **Publications:**

### **1. Theses**

M.A. — The Influence of Instruction on the Ability of Children to Interpret Maps. Lincoln: University of Nebraska.

Ph.D. — A Technique of Selecting, Organizing, and Evaluating Instructional Materials for a Course In Modern Problems. Lincoln: University of Nebraska.

### **2. Books**

#### **Co-author:**

University of Nebraska (Lincoln Campus). Teachers College. Aviation Education Research Group. (1942). *Elements of Pre-Flight Aeronautics*. New York, NY: The MacMillan Company.

(1943). *Friends Near and Far*. Chicago, IL: The Follett Publishing Company.

(1944). *Now We Fly*. Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1946). *Aviation Education, Plans and Materials*. Chicago, IL: The United States Junior Chamber of Commerce.

(1949). *Aviation Study Manual*. CAP, Vol. I. Book II. Washington, D.C.: United States Printing Office.

(1951). *Neighbors in Latin America*. (plus workbook, "Living with Neighbors in Latin America"). Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1952). *Neighbors Around the World*. (plus workbook, "Living with Neighbors Around the World"). Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1952). *Neighbors in the Americas*. (plus workbook, "Living with Neighbors in the Americas"). Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1952). *Our Neighbors at Home*. (plus workbook, "Living with Our Neighbors at Home"). Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1954). *Neighbors Across the Seas*. (plus workbook, "Living with Neighbors Across the Seas"). Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1954). *Neighbors in the United States and Canada*. (plus workbook, "Living with Neighbors in the United States and Canada"). Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1955). *Exploring Near and Far*. Chicago, IL: The Follett Publishing Company.

(1956). *Neighbors and Faith Across the Seas*. Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1956). *Neighbors in Canada and Latin America*. Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1957). *Neighbors and Faith in Latin America*. Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

(1958). *Our United States In a World of Neighbors*. Philadelphia, PA: The John C. Winston Company.

### 3. Magazine and Yearbook Articles

Co-author. (1936, May). Equipment for Teaching Geography. *The School Executive*.

(1936, November). The Influence of Specific Instruction on Map Interpretation. *The Journal of Geography*.

(1939, December). Selecting Geography Equipment. *The Nebraska Educational Journal*.

(1941, April). A Course in Modern Problems for the Senior High School. *North Central Association Quarterly*.

(1941, September). The New Approach to Senior Social Science. *The School Executive*.

(1942, September). Pre-Flight Aeronautics: How to Launch the Course. *The Clearing House*.

(1947, May). Forecasting Effects of Aviation. *Air Age Education News*.

(1947, September). What is UNESCO?. *The Nebraska Educational Journal*.

(1947, October). The New Social Studies Program. *The Nebraska Educational Journal*.

(1948, January). This is UNESCO. *The Nebraska Educational Journal*.

Co-author. (1948, April). The United Nations Comes to Nebraska. *The Nebraska Educational Journal*.

Co-author. (1948, May). Learning the Ways of United Nations. *The Nebraska Educational Journal*.

(1951, April). Report from the Montreal Seminar. *Social Education*, 15.

(1952, January). The Struggle for the Minds of Men. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*.

(1955, September). Air-Age Geography, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. *Education*.

(1959). Chapter 16, The Place of Geography in the Training of Social Studies Teachers. In *National Council for the Social Studies Yearbook for 1959*.

#### 4. Other Publications

##### Editor:

(1943). "Suggested Program of Studies for Nebraska High Schools." Lincoln, NE: Department of Public Instruction.

(1944). "Essential Understandings for the Age of Flight." Lincoln, NE: Department of Public Instruction.

(1945). "Cornhusker Boys' State Manual." Lincoln, NE: The American Legion, Department of Nebraska.

(1946). "Educational Motion Pictures and Teacher—Pupil Guides for the Air Age." The Department of Public Instruction.

**Co-author:**

(1950). "Living Together in Our United Nations." New York, NY: The United Nations, Department of Public Information.

(1950). "The United Nations and Geography Teaching." New York, NY: The United Nations, Department of Public Information.

(1956, March). "Air Training Command Advisory Board Annual Report." Washington, D.C.

(1961, April). "Countdown in Education," Overview.

(1961). *Men of Space, Vol. 2*, Preface. Chilton Company, Publishers.

(1963, March). "Geography's Aerospace Dimensions." The Pennsylvania Geographer.

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Link, M. (personal communication, September 22, 1999).

Lueninghoener, Florence M., Nebraska Chapter Ninety-Nines (1994). *Nebraska Aviation Hall of Fame Nomination Form*. Unpublished document.

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University of Nebraska at Lincoln (1948). University Library, Permanent Archives Collection Document, unpublished document.

University of Nebraska at Lincoln (1963). University Library, Permanent Archives Collection Document, unpublished document.

University of Nebraska at Lincoln (1975). University Library, Permanent Archives Collection Document, unpublished document.

University of Nebraska at Lincoln (1976). University Library, Permanent Archives Collection Document, unpublished document.